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21 April 1966

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Plans and Review Staff

SUBJECT : Improving CIA's Competitive Recruitment Posture on the Campus

Statement of the Problem

In seeking to obtain a fair share of the nation's talented and aggressive young graduates, the Central Intelligence Agency finds itself in dogged competition with both private industry and other Governmental departments and agencies. Moreover, each of the aforementioned is particularly watchful for the same type of individual, e.g., impressive academic record, ambitious, free of criminal conviction, and whenever possible, draft exempt. As one might suspect, demand continues to outstrip ready supply. As a result, the greater share of the plum must go to those whose recruitment efforts are imaginative, timely, broad in scope, and continuous.

Discussion

The success or failure of college recruitment must ultimately depend upon effective student contact. [The term "effective student contact" must connote "selective contact" as well. Merely to increase the number of student interviews will not in itself insure success.] At the present time, it is my belief that the Agency is NOT presenting itself adequately to the very students in whom it has the greatest interest.

At a minimum there would seem to be at least three avenues by which the Agency could--and to some extent does--approach its recruitment tasks: (1) through college and university placement offices; (2) by enlisting the services of various professors and heads of department within American schools; and (3) through a selective mailing program. Of these, only the latter has not yet been attempted. As a result, it is the purpose of this paper to explore some of the possibilities of such an approach.

It should be pointed out that the current emphasis given the "Field Recruiter-Placement Office" relationship is both necessary and desirable. Whether or not these offices assist substantially in the acquisition of qualified applicants is questionable. To be sure, many students seldom if ever consult with their placement officers during the whole of their academic experience. Nevertheless, it is helpful indeed that a campus facility be available for arranging and/or conducting student interviews.

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As a personal aside, I can recall only one occasion during my undergraduate years when I was made aware of the Agency's college recruitment program--and that as a result of an obscure poster which appeared only briefly on an equally obscure departmental bulletin board. The four flights of stairs leading to the university placement office were usually sufficient in themselves to dissuade all but the unemployable. Later, as a graduate student on a different campus, the school newspaper informed of an impending visit by an Agency representative. Upon inquiring at the placement office, a late evening interview was arranged. Since that time I have often marveled at the chance circumstances which surrounded my "coming aboard."

In recognition of the Agency's continuing need for quality applicants, it would seem that a more expansive and perhaps different approach might be undertaken. Limitations imposed by time and money notwithstanding, the third approach--"selective mailing"--might well prove most effective.

SELECTIVE MAILING PROGRAM

To implement such a program it would first be necessary to compile a list of names of professors and heads of department from selected American colleges and universities. Concurrently, an adaptation of the Recruitment Handbook would be prepared. [Of necessity, a multi-purpose publication often gives the appearance of "covering the waterfront." As a result, a number of occupational areas may appear to have little relevancy to Agency needs. In an effort to obviate this difficulty, single page supplements pertaining to particular hard-to-get occupational specialties, e.g., engineers, physicists, etc., would be prepared for those materials destined for distribution at selected institutions or departments therein.] The Handbook would contain (1) background information concerning the Agency's founding and activities; (2) an indication of the many and varied employment opportunities within CIA; and (3) an invitation to qualified young people to "come aboard!" Each publication would include a two-part form insert which, when completed, would provide (1) a Brief Biographical Resume; and (2) a Request for Application for Employment (dates of availability, etc.). The form would be franked, self-addressed, and require only minimum time for completion.

With both the mailing list and Handbook prepared, a targeting schema (selected departments and schools) would be structured. Upon completion, either of two approaches, or a combination of both, would be possible. Primarily the choices are these:

PLAN "A"

Forwarded to each selected faculty member or campus official would be a copy of the Agency publications, together with a letter asking that he peruse the Handbook at his convenience and indicate on the enclosed "mailer" the number of publications he would be willing to distribute to his advisees, graduate students, et al. (TAB A)

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PLAN "B"

Prepared packets of Handbooks would be forwarded--without solicitation--to the various professors and heads of departments for subsequent distribution. An accompanying letter requesting their assistance would be included in each mailing. (TAB B) Inherent in this approach is the possibility of creating some degree of antipathy not heretofore present. On the other hand, the likelihood that the publications would get wider distribution simply because they would be underfoot is perhaps more realistic.

PLAN "C"

In those instances where neither of the above plans would seem appropriate, a combination of both could be adopted with little difficulty. One of the principal advantages of a mailing program is its almost limitless flexibility.

Regardless which method is selected, once the Handbook would be placed in the student's hands, it would then be his responsibility--if interested--to complete and return the form insert. Upon receipt, Agency personnel would (1) classify each form; (2) forward the appropriate standardized response--and necessary forms when applicable; and (3) begin a tentative file on those applicants in whom the Agency has an apparent interest. Additionally, as names and addresses become available, there should be established a coordinating facility between Headquarters and the field to insure maximum opportunity for timely, personal interviews whenever practicable. (One conceivable solution to this challenge might be the greater utilization of field screening personnel.)

SUMMARY

Admittedly, a program of this magnitude would require a number of administrative considerations, not the least of which would be time, money, and personnel. Nevertheless, the benefits to be derived would seem to more than compensate. Principally, these benefits would include:

STUDENT AWARENESS OF OCCUPATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

STUDENT-AGENCY COMMUNICATION AND FOLLOW-UP

IDENTIFICATION OF COOPERATIVE FACULTY MEMBERS AND CAMPUS OFFICIALS
(TABS C-D)

INCREASED NUMBERS OF QUALITY STUDENT RECRUITMENTS

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[Additionally, as an outgrowth to this approach there exists the opportunity to establish a kind of "selection register" similar to the one currently in use by the State Department.]

Once adopted and properly administered, it is believed that the above program could substantially improve the campus recruitment posture of the Agency.



Career Trainee
Plans and Review Staff
Office of Personnel

25X1A

Attachments:

- TAB A -- Letter Plan "A"
- TAB B -- Letter Plan "B"
- TAB C -- Improved Faculty-Agency Posture
- TAB D -- Letter of Thanks

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Letter Plan "A"

Dr. Ivory Tower
Professor of Economics
University of Denver
Denver, Colorado

Dear Professor Tower:

Enclosed is a copy of our recently published "handbook", the general purpose of which is to introduce the Central Intelligence Agency to the many college and university students who may be considering careers in the Federal Government. More specifically, the publication is designed to provide some insight into the CIA's founding, its current mission, and the occupational opportunities which exist within the Agency.

We are hoping that it may be possible to distribute our "handbook" to all interested persons within the next several months. If you would be so kind as to let us know the number of copies which you would make available to your students and advisees, we would be most happy to forward them to you prepaid, of course. The detachable form (below) and the enclosed self-addressed envelope are provided for your convenience.

Your assistance in this program is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Seymour Progress
Director of _____

Encl

HANDBOOKS

From: Dr. Ivory Tower
Professor of Economics
University of Denver
Denver, Colorado

Total number of Handbooks needed _____

[Note: Is the above address complete and correct? If not, would you please make any corrections or additions which may be necessary.]

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TAB B

Letter Plan "B"

Dr. Ivory Tower
Professor of Economics
University of Denver
Denver, Colorado

Dear Professor Tower:

The published materials which accompany this letter were prepared for the purpose of introducing the Central Intelligence Agency to the many college and university students who may be considering careers in the Federal Government. More specifically, the "handbook" was designed to provide some insight into the CIA's founding, its current mission, and the occupational opportunities which exist within the Agency.

We are hoping that our publication will get the widest possible distribution among your many students and advisees. Should you wish to have additional copies forwarded to you at any time in the future, please complete and return the detachable form (below) and we shall be most happy to meet your request.

Your assistance in this program is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Seymour Progress
Director of _____

Encl

HANDBOOKS

From: Dr. Ivory Tower
Professor of Economics
University of Denver
Denver, Colorado

Additional number of handbooks needed _____

[Note: Is the above address complete and correct? If not, would you please make any corrections or additions which may be necessary.]

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TAB C

Improved Faculty-Agency Posture

An occasional hue and cry to the contrary, the fact is that there do exist university people who neither malign the Agency nor oppose vehemently its expressed objectives. And yet, little tangible progress has been made as a result of recent efforts to enlist their services. At the present time, only a limited number of career EOD's can be attributed to faculty spotting and referral.

In terms of potential value, one hesitates to speculate too freely. But it should be remembered that faculty members are quite often required to wear two hats -- teacher and program adviser; not a few careers have been influenced, if not born, as a result of both. To establish a rapprochement with this select group, on an even limited basis, would doubtless result in the identification and eventual recruitment of a number of talented and aggressive young people.

The natural response is, of course, "it sounds good, but how do you do it?" The following is only one of several approaches which might prove effective.

First of all, a selective list of names would be compiled on the basis of (1) requests for brochures (Plan "A"); (2) brochure distribution (Plan "B"); and (3) information obtained from returned form inserts. Upon completion of the list, each of the selected individuals would be sent a personal "letter of thanks" -- expressing the Agency's gratitude for their kind and helpful assistance. (TAB D) As evidence of continued assistance would manifest itself, a certificate of appreciation, or similar award, would be conferred. For exceptional service over an extended period of time, perhaps an all-expense paid trip to the nation's capital and CIA Headquarters would be in order. In a word, commensurate recognition for services rendered.

Still another aspect of faculty relations which is deserving of attention is that of face-to-face contact. It is believed that considerable inroads could be made as result of personal visitations by Agency representatives -- other than field recruiters. Such an effort would of necessity be selective, low-keyed, concerted, and dignified. Its purposes would be to "sell" the Central Intelligence Agency to the friendly and uncommitted, and to make it a bit more palatable to the recalcitrant.

Additionally, a re-thinking of the prevailing attitudes surrounding organizational anonymity would seem desirable. Like most things unexplained, one's first response to the clandestine nature of the Agency is quite often fear and misapprehension. Once understood, the unknown becomes far less awesome and foreboding.

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TAB D

"Letter of Thanks"

Dr. Ivory Tower
Professor of Economics
University of Denver
Denver, Colorado

Dear Professor Tower:

Please accept our sincere thanks for making the recently published CIA "handbook" available to your students.

As you know, there is an ever increasing need for talented and promising young people in the Federal Government. As a result, the Central Intelligence Agency -- as well as other government agencies -- must look to the colleges and universities for the highly qualified personnel so vital to our national growth and security.

Your helpful assistance is gratefully appreciated, and we would hope that you might suggest this Agency as a prospective employer to any of your interested and deserving young people. If we can provide you with any further information or materials, please call on us.

With kindest personal regards, I am

Very truly yours,

Seymour Progress
Director of _____

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